MEGHALAYA: Under the CIB scheme, two projects namely Improvement of road near EPIP, Byrnihat and Installation of a Sub Station at the EPIP have been sanctioned. An EPIP project is also under implementation at Byrnihat.

MANIPUR: An EPIP has recently been sanctioned for Manipur. There is one Coffee Demonstration farm at Noney in Manipur.

MIZORAM: There is one Coffee Demonstration farm at Kolasiv. Under CIB scheme, a project for construction of a composite building at Zokhawathar has been sanctioned. The proposed station will provide single-window facilities for trade with Myanmar.

TRIPURA: Under the CIB scheme two projects namely improvement of road from Fire Station Chaumuhani to Akhaura Checkpost and installation of weighbridges at Akhaura and Raghan Land Customs Station are under implementation. There is one coffee Demonstration farm at Agartala. Rubber Board has also its office at Agartala.

ARUNACHAL PRADESH: There is one Coffee Demonstation farm at Demoli.

NAGALAND: There is one Coffee Demonstration farm in Kiruphima. There is an EPIP in the State.

International Year for Elderly People

*18. SHRI GOVIND RAM MIRI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) What are the schemes/projects Government have since launched to mark the international year for elderly people; and

(b) The details of allocation of Plan and Non-Plan funds for each of these, State-wise besides Central ones?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI):

(a) To mark the International year of Older Persons, the Government announced the National Policy on Older Persons in January, 1999. A statement giving details of initiatives/welfare measures taken in pursuance of the National Policy is enclosed. (*See* below).

(b) While no specific allocation of funds was made for the International year an increased budget allocation of Rs. 15 crore during 1999-2000 was

made for Plan schemes (An Integrated Programme for Older Persons) to cater to the special initiatives/welfare measures undertaken by the Government for older persons during the International year of Older persons. The Scheme of Assistance to Panchayat Raj Institutions/Voluntary Organisations/Self Help Groups for Construction of Old Age Homes/Multi Service Centres for Older Persons the grant for construction of Old Age Homes has a budget provision in the current financial year of Rs. 2.39 crores.

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(i) A National Council for Older Persons (NCOP) was constituted in May, 1999 to operationalise the National Policy.

(ii) Both the schemes for older persons were reviewed and revised during 1998-99 to make them more flexible and to allow a wide range of initiatives to promote best interests of older persons. The other scheme of grant in aid for construction of old age homes/ multi-service centres was revised to enhance the one time construction grant from Rs. 5 lakh to Rs. 30 lakh to eligible organizations.

(iii) In order to examine the policy questions connected with old age income security a national project titled "OASIS" (Old Age Social and Income Security) was commissioned in August, 1998. The first Report of the Committee was formally released by MOS (SJ&E) in February, 1999. It contains recommendations which will enable the members of Provident Funds and Employee Pension Scheme, as well as Public Provident Fund subscribers to greatly benefit from increased returns though professional fund management and prudently liberalised investment guidelines. This report is being examined by the Ministry of Finance and in the meantime second and final report of project OASIS is being finalised.

(iv) On the request of MOS of Union Law Minister, Chief Justice of India and Chief Justices of all the High Courts in the country, instructions have been issued by the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India to all Chief Justices of High Courts for expeditious disposal of cases involving older persons 60 years and above.

(v) On the request of this Ministry, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have issued instructions to all State Governments to ensure provision of separate queues for older persons in hospitals at every stage and the other request of the Ministry for inclusion of geriatrics in the medical curricula of the country is under their consideration.

(vi) At the initiative of this Ministry, a Telephone Helpone has been started by an NGO called Agewell with the financial assistance from this Ministry.

(vii) A Secretariat for NCOP which would also process and take follow-up action on the representations/complaints/grievances of older persons has been establihsed by Age Well Foundation on the initiative and with the financial assistance of this Ministry.

(viii) Ministry of Telecommunications has announced grant of telephone connections to older persons on priority basis.

(ix) Ministry of Rural Development is considering launching of a new scheme called ANNAPURNA under which free foodgrains upto 10 Kgs are to be provided to older persons.

Grants to NGOs Running Educational Centre for Tribal Women

*19. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether financial assistance is being granted to some voluntary organisations and NGOs running educational centres for tribal women in different parts of the country;

(b) If so, the details thereof, and

(c) If not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As many as NGOs have been assisted for setting up and running of Educational Complexes in 10 States of the Country having less than 10% literacy amongst the tribal women under the Scheme of Educational Complex in Law Literacy Pockets for development of Women Literacy in Tribal Areas